Who was Shakespeare ?
Christopher Marlowe

The uncovered story of an infinite doubt *

* For easier understanding of a complex issue, the Warwickshire family name Shakspere is used for the person from Stratford, and Shakespeare for the author of the works.

Any careful researcher or reader who takes the time to study the facts - the literary sources, arguments and evidence - must renounce the dogmatic belief that William Shakspere of Stratford is identical to the author associated with the London theatre. There was only one truly great poetic genius in his time, Christopher Marlowe, who in his 30th year (May 1593) was threatened by execution, following slanderous accusations against him by the English church and its agents. A feigned death, staged in Deptford with the help of the Queen and her senior adviser William Cecil, saw him banished for his own safety, but at the price of a permanent loss of name and identity.

This thesis, followed by the continuance of his writing under multiple masking pseudonyms, including Shakespeare, is valid, not merely hypothetical. We reach it with a high degree of certainty. It should end the bizarre and historically unique authorship debate. The camouflaging pen-name Shakespeare was adopted in June 1593 and used on a single-page dedication for the poem Venus and Adonis, ten days after Marlowe's body was allegedly buried in St Nicholas churchyard on the edge of Greenwich and Deptford.

We suggest that the name was used because the businessman William Shakspere of Stratford was on the spot in London and was paid to add extra pseudonymous 'cover' for Marlowe's escape. His evocative "masking" name bought silence and a future gravesite to ensure the survival of the poet genius.

Why Shakspere of Stratford cannot have been Shakespeare?

Just a few facts and arguments against Shakspere listed here (out of many) make it seem impossible that the Stratford man was the poet of "Romeo and Juliet" or "Hamlet":

1) Even after 400 years of intensive research into the life of William Shakespeare (1564-1616) no documents have ever been found that demonstrate a literary or artistic activity, other than the pen-name. One would have expected at least preserved "literary" rudiments (such as letters, prose, poems, correspondence, records, manuscripts, diaries, obituaries, orders, reports of his friends, contemporary character markings, notes on a patronage, etc.) to suggest that Shakspere is identical with Shakespeare, the great genius of world literature. The absence of such evidence makes the Stratfordian case highly implausible.

2) Shakspere and Marlowe, (born two months apart in 1564), never met in London. Marlowe, through an early artistic development phase (1578-1593), established himself as a precocious poet and theatrical genius (having written famous plays such as Tamburlaine, Doctor Faustus, Edward II) and a superstar of London theatre. His instant 'death', following a stabbing above the right eye, rolled seamlessly and within weeks (see time scale) into a new biography of the hitherto unknown writer, Shakespeare, who arrived with his successful opus.1 (Venus and Adonis) at a peak of literary mastery. Marlowe and Shakspere did not overlap in their creative activity for a single day. Their plays were in theatres only a a few hundred metres apart - so their ignorance of each other is not even theoretically conceivable.

3) Shakespeare's parents, like his wife and daughters, could not read and write. It is inconceivable that a poet with some of the most impressive linguistic capabilities in history would leave no sign or imprinting of early intellectual achievement, nor that he left his daughters, Judith and Susanna, as illiterate Stratford residents unable to read their father's plays and poems.

4) It is said that the universal genius acquired his prodigious gifts and learning in the local Grammar school, in a town of some 1500 inhabitants. If he left school at the age of 13 with only one teacher - he somehow went on to master Latin, Greek, Italian, Spanish, French, Dutch, Hebrew, and English. This is literally impossible for a Stratfordian, because many texts (including rare works in Italian, French or Spanish), used as the source of his plays, were not yet translated into English.

5 Virtually all biographers and critics describe Marlowe as the most important literary and intellectual "predecessor", "forerunner" or pioneer for William Shakespeare. But how, with two persons of the same age, can one be termed the predecessor of the other?

6) The plays of Shakespeare leave him as the towering personality of his time. He had some of the most "encyclopedic" knowledge of the world

and rare communication skills to back up esoteric wisdom in many fields. It is not possible that there is not a single contemporary source to provide evidence of how the unlearned Shakespeare should have been able, for a quarter century in one of the largest cities in Europe, to communicate with the world. There must be a more plausible explanation.

7) And 95 percent of Shakespeare's plays deal with the highest circles - from monarchs and dukes to knights. They offer far-reaching insights into the English and European royal courts. Shakespeare did not spend a single day of his life at the court. Without access, he could not have written his detailed sonnets and plays. This fact alone excludes Shakspere of Stratford as the author of the works. And this is more than a probability. It borders on certainty.

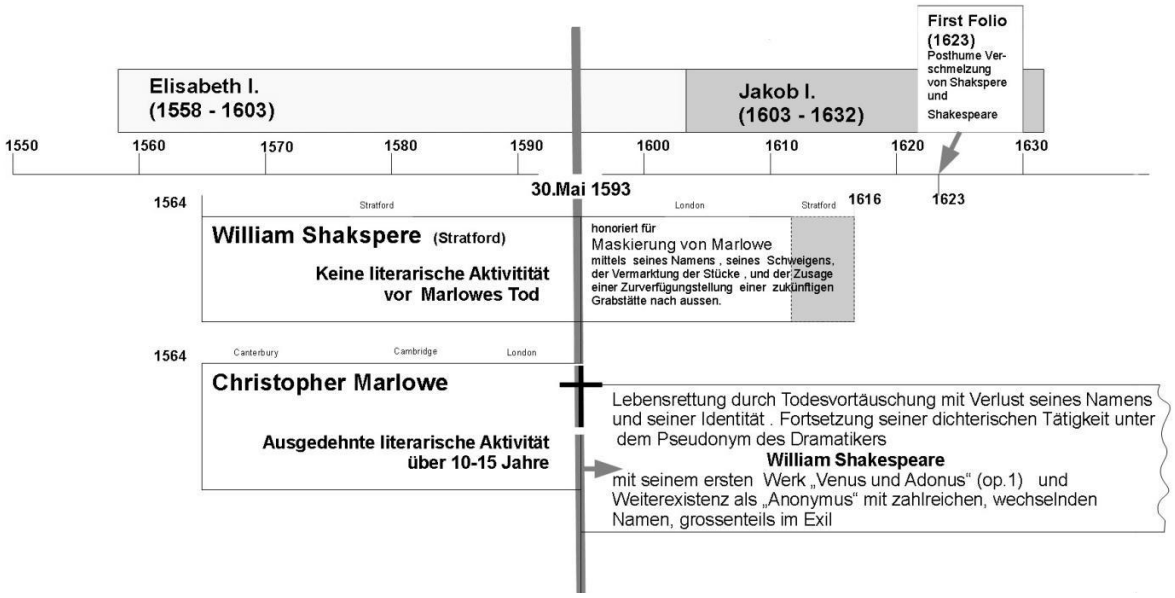
8) Shortly before his death (1616) Shakspere wrote a three-page will. He did not mention any "literary legacy" or testimony (e.g. documents, books, manuscript, etc). The learning and experience displayed is typical of a small shopkeeper. The Stratford profile does not fit the personality of the great writer.

9) Shakespeare's death in 1616 was a "non-event" for local and distant observers. There were no eulogies describing him as the greatest poet of his age. No one noticed his death, lamented his passing, or praised him as a literary talent.

10) Similar strong arguments (such as handwriting, sonnets, theatrical career, First Folio, grave monument, traveling in Europe, etc.) must be omitted and cannot be discussed here.

Marlowe's "alleged" death bears the seal mark of a successful life-saving plot of the crown.

The facts and arguments mentioned here helped to trigger a lasting doubt on Shakspere and a search for a more plausible author. Over time, three serious candidates emerged: In the second half of the 19th century, Francis Bacon (1), then at the beginning of the 20th century, Edward de Vere (2), Earl of Oxford, and finally Christopher Marlowe(3). For all three candidates, weighty counter-arguments remained: (1) Francis Bacon was a gifted philosopher, politician and lawyer, but in his lifetime not a dramatic poet and artist. (2) Edward de Vere wrote verses and was descended from the high aristocracy - the social environment in several Shakespeare plays - but he died too early (1604) and was never recognized in his lifetime as a dramatist, let alone a genius. (3) Christopher Marlowe was the poetic and dramatic genius par excellence, but he died too early. Assumptions about his personality can be maintained up to this day, but they do not alter the fact that he disappeared from history on June 1 in Deptford, and an even more ingenious poet of the same age followed within days.



Timeline of William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe(alias Shakespeare)

Why Marlowe became Shakespeare?

In May 1593 Marlowe, the poet and playwright star of the London stage, was denounced because of alleged literary involvement in seditious placards (the Dutch Libels, signed only by 'Tamburlaine') and for distribution and possession of heretical and atheistic writings. He was arrested and in acute danger. His imprisonment, torture and execution could be averted only by the support of the leading statesman, William Cecil (Lord Burghley). As acting head of the Secret Service following the death of Francis Walsingham, Marlowe was secretly in his service. He had to be declared dead by a coroner's inquest, and his identity had to be erased. His talent, however, could continue through the pseudonym Shake-speare, a "posthumous" closure of the Deptford plot.

Marlowe, simply, took on William Shakespeare and other pseudonyms. He became an 'Anonymous' himself and wrote under a variety of noms de plume. His survival and his 'anon' publications were coupled with the threat of permanent loss of identity, not least for safety. In his second, "posthumous" life after 1593, he was forced for more than four decades to conceal his identity and his incredible literary productivity due to frequent changes in his camouflage and literary pseudonymes and initials (e.g., Barnabe Barnes to William Basse, John Bodenham, Samuel Brandon, Nicholas Breton, Richard Brome, William Browne, William Clarke, John Clapham, Peter Coles, Francis Davison, John Davies, Michael Drayton, Bartholomew Griffin, Richard Barnfield, Gervase Markham, Tobie Matthew, Thomas Overbury, Henry Peacham, Thomas Shelton, Henry Southwell, Robert Tofte, William Warner, John Weever, Henry Willobie, Geffrey Whitney, George Wither and others).

This viable hypothesis, supported by literary texts, can detect most of the reasons for the centuries-old, seemingly intractable problem of Shakespearean authorship. But it inevitably must exceed the imagination of uninformed ignorants or biased experts. Only those who see through the complexity of the processes and recognize that the only existing genius had to "suffer" from a splitting of identity, can comprehend and be aware of the bizarre, consciously produced equation : Shakespeare equals Shakespeare

Positive cumulative evidence for Marlowe

Diametrically opposed to the negative evidence against Shakespeare you will notice the positive evidence for Christopher Marlowe (small sample):

1) Because of his talent he received a scholarship for high school in Canterbury and a 6-7 year university scholarship at Cambridge, completing his Master of Arts (MA)

2) He moved in the highest circles of the court and society (such as William Cecil, Thomas Walsingham, Robert Devereux, Anthony Bacon, among others ...)

3) He travelled early on the European mainland on behalf of the Crown (e.g. Holland, France) and probably accompanied Philip Sidney as a young page to his three-year European Trip (1572-74)

4) In his brief official early life time Marlowe created outstanding theatrical and literary works (1587-1593) (such as Hero and Leander, Dr. Faustus, Edward II).

5) He must be recognized as the first English author to develop the full potential of blank verse and make this the dominant form of verse in the English drama of the Elizabethan age.

6) Contemporary obituaries substantiate that there was no comparable poet beside Marlowe. (Heywood: *Best of Poets in that age ...* Petowe*: Marlowe, no English writer can as yet attaine* Harvey*: the highest mind, that ever haunted Paul's, etc.*) An equivalent, independent genius Shakespeare cannot have existed next to him.

7) Biographical aspects of Marlowe's tragic loss of identity are highly reflected in Shake-speare's sonnets.

8) Because of the excessive number of significant text parallels, Marlowe's own works have to be identified as the early works of Shakespeare.

9) Virtually all of Shakespeare's dramatic works reveal significant fingerprints in Marlowe's work and autobiography. This concurrence is far beyond any coincidental probability.

10) In various works of Shakespeare (e.g. The Taming of the Shrew, "A Winter's-Tale", Pericles, Cymbeline, Timon of Athens, Twelfth Night, etc.) significant passages or scenes correspond to Marlowe's biographical situation.

11) Unique significances and texts of "supposedly" different authors between 1593 and 1643 can be identified as the second life "Marlowe/alias Shakespeare" under feigned identities, names (see

above) and initials. According to these facts Marlowe must have reached a high age.

Need of a reversal of the Authorship approach

The logic of the approach must be reversed today. The dogma ("Because Marlowe's death is acknowledged in 1593, accordingly 1000 arguments must be untrue or incorrect!"), needs to be reversed today in a scientific contradiction-free paradigm ("Since 1000 arguments for Marlowe/contra Shakspere of Stratford exist, the singular "argument of Marlowe's death has to be false.")
The massive historical conspiracy with the tragic fate of Marlowe/Shakespeare was in principle fabricated, to remain undetected.

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